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When I look back upon my four years at UD, many images flash through my mind, and I realize just how much I've shared with you. We have passed through many times together; some good, others bad, some exhilarating and others so depressing that we could have sworn the world was crashing down upon us. We have discovered so much during our sojourn here in the realm of new ideas, new friendships, and new outlooks upon ourselves, in particular, and life in general. Perhaps we even still remember some of them.

But just what does it mean to remember? From my study of Biology, and more specifically, Human Physiology, I have learned that memory is so vastly complex that the exact physiological mechanisms are not even known at present. Memory is said to involve the recall of ideas previously stored in the brain; therefore, to remember is literally a "re-membering"--a putting back together into a cohesive unit the pieces of information that we have learned. Memory serves as a common link for all of our experiences. We can learn about the great ideas of Aristotle, Locke, or Freud, and ten minutes later we can sit at Club Schmitz employing these principles to solve the ever-perplexing question of "who's going to win the Cowboys' game this weekend." In this case, we have remembered what we have learned, and our discussions at such renowned philosopher's hangouts as Schmitz or Diamond H reinforce our memories so that they remain with us permanently.

Memory, as you can see, plays an important role in any academic institution, but this is especially so in a center such as UD, where the liberal arts tradition is stressed so strongly. This is because of the integral coupling of learning and memory. Please do not misconstrue this message and think that learning is pure memorization; rather, our education transcends mere note taking and regurgitating of what we have memorized. In learning the universal truths to which we are exposed in the core curriculum of our liberal arts education, we gain a solid foundation from which we can view and understand our experiences. Our education is not merely directed to achieving some level of competence in a profession; rather we have digested and responded to the ideas which we have encountered at UD, and in so doing we are provided with a versatility which we can apply to almost any situation we meet. It is in this application of our ideas that memory exerts its influence; we recreate the knowledge we have acquired in order to fulfill the expectations that life will require of us.

In acting as a link for our experience, memory connects the past with the present, and the present with the future. We observe this often in our education at UD. The great truths we are taught are preserved from a glorious heritage, and we make them our own--as well as their making us part of their own--when we respond to them, whether we accept them or not. These ideas call us to act in some way, and in our action we reevaluate them in order to adapt to the future.

Memory encompasses all aspects of life; it is not confined to

the world of academia. During our years here we have partaken of individual experiences which we treasure, or regret, as the case may be, in our recollection. We have also participated in many communal events, but each of us has unique memories of these shared occasions. Our recollections recombine in various ways to present different perspectives for each individual. All of us have experienced in some way or another Charity Week, intramural basketball games, or our semester in Europe. Each one of us has fond memories of these events, yet these reminiscences are certainly not identical. Remembering allows us to participate in the community, while at the same time preserving our precious individuality.

Undoubtedly, we all have fond memories of our years at UD. We have made friendships, some transient, but others that will endure for the rest of our lives. We have experienced Groundhog and the McDermott lectures; Spring Olympics and Wasteland papers. Perhaps the true watershed of our memories is the Rome experience. We all admit that there was something special about this time; some go so far as to say that it was the best time of their lives. We remember St. Peter's, the Marienplatz, the Eiffel Tower, and the Carlsberg Brewery. We recall the different people and lifestyles we encountered. What is so special about these memories? There is no single answer. Maybe it lies in our awareness of being in a place very different than that to which we had been accustomed. Perhaps it can be found in the carefree attitude we had, which resulted in just that one time when we lacked the moderation of the Magnanimous Man. Possibly it resides in the awakening of how very lucky we were to be in Europe

in the first place. The answer is most probably a combination of many things, again unique to each individual, but with common elements that allow each of us to understand why we treasure these memories.

Our minds can also recall unpleasant events. All of us possess memories of the desperation of a last-minute term paper, a failed test, or a hangover. Yet somehow we have always persevered. In fact, time has a way of washing away the sting of these occasions. The recollection of these experiences can even serve medicinal purposes, as when we swear ^{after a bad hangover} that we'll never drink again. At the very least, we are now able to joke about the recollections of failing an exam, since with time, we realized that the situation was not as hopeless as it appeared.

All of our experiences cannot be pleasant: we also possess sad memories. At UD we have all been touched by the anguish of a friend's death, or shared trying moments with a fellow student who has been sorrowed by a death in his family. In both cases, time works through memory to allow us to see the value of these experiences. When we think about those who have died our recollections serve to remind us of the good times we shared and the light that they have shone upon our lives. It is in these such grievous occasions that the true greatness of the people who comprise the UD community manifests itself, since everyone, although experiencing an inner void within his own person, tries to comfort others in their time of need.

As human beings, we possess deficiencies inherent in our finite condition. Memory does not escape this; forgetting is a failure of memory. How many times have we drawn a blank on a test or after K of O? Or, if you share my usual predicament, borrow money from a

friend and forget (at least that's the excuse) to pay him back. We often forget, too, about the dignity of others, and this constitutes selfishness; or sometimes we lean so heavily upon family and friends that we take for granted all they do for us, day in and day out. It is only upon reflection, that we remember the virtues of other people, as well as becoming conscious of our own drawbacks. Memory, then, is an avenue which can lead us out of the mire of our own selfishness; it can allow us to be selfless in respecting the dignity of others, as well as being patient in accepting their--and our--limitations.

According to St. Augustine, the depths of forgetting result in sin. Augustine describes sin as the loss of the vision of God when man fell from Eden. Rather than directing his thoughts toward God and "the Good, the True, and the Beautiful," man errs by focusing attention upon himself and the finite gifts of the earth. We are saved by Christ's Passion, Death, and Resurrection, which restore the lost fragments of our memory into a firm basis so that we can realign our thoughts to the Father.

The major complaint (besides the food) that I've heard about UD is that it is not part of the real world. Indeed, we are sheltered from the outside in some respects, but we are not detached completely. The real world is close at hand; we do not have to shed our UD experiences to step out into it. Our memories of UD, what we have learned and the people we have know η , have prepared us for the real world and will guide us through it. Once again, we can see how memory links the past, present, and future: we learn from the past and we can apply this knowledge to the future.

In the same manner, graduation is simultaneously an end and a beginning. We leave part of ourself behind, but at the same time we take on^a new self. We will all probably experience the feeling of an inner void after we are separated from our friends, but we must proceed and direct our attention to what lies ahead. We will not go unprepared, though, for at our right hand our memories of UD will link our old and new selves and escort us through our lives.

My friends, the four years that I've spent with you at the University of Dallas have been the best of my life, and speaking to you today has been the greatest privilege I've ever had. I am proud to be part of the Class of 1981. You guys are the greatest, and I shall remember you always. Thank you and God Bless.